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MAGAZINE

The New Century's

First Sweet Girl Graduate



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CHANGELESS as the everlasting hills—and quite as ancient—is that decree of Fashion which governs the Commencement appearance of "The who is about to be Graduated."

Simplicity dictates its context; and white muslin rules its rhetoric. There is no other law. There never has been any other. If, perchance, the maiden whose school days are about to be ended takes lawmaking—editorial lawmaking—into her own slender fingers, and begins to say what she will have for a commencement frock, and what she will not have, then 'tis high time to draw the kindly mantle of charity over the result. There is every likelihood that said mantle will needs be ample.

And when you come to think about it, she really can't be blamed this charming young schoolgirl whose first pretensions frock is under discussion. I mean you can't blame her for wanting it fine and fancy. That's only natural and girlish. The real blame of the matter lies with mamma, who weakly yields when mademoiselle says she will have tulle with tulle and chiffon; and that she doesn't care to let what the other girls will wear; and she just won't look so horrid and plain and dowdy in that "flimsy mull or common organdy."

Then, gentle dames with daughters, is the time for much patience and all your persuasive powers.

Of course, you who are grown to woman's estate can perfectly and comprehensively grasp the fitness of white muslin for school girls, and the perfect appropriateness of simple ruffles and frills for youthful green and rosy cheeks. But daughter's standpoint is not the same. She wants a radical change from her school-girl frocks of simplicity and girlishness.

She wants to shine. Well, so she shall, but with the glorious trappings of youth—the elegance which invests all young and graceful feminine beings; the beauty which comes of superb hair and a high neck of exquisite lace for some weeks prior to commencement; provided mademoiselle comprehends there is a tendency to be affected by such indulgence.

When every girl in a class of fifty goes, for instance, across in velvet, some one particular fabric on her last school day, then

the task for mamma is greatly simplified. This is very generally the custom, I find. Necessity has brought it about. Oftentimes there are, in a big class of girls, no small number whose family exchequer will by no means permit of ribbons and lace to set off their faces. Economy must be studied when the gown of gowns is under discussion, and a sum of \$5 or \$10, perhaps, made to cover every expense connected with commencement, the buying and making of a frock; the purchase of such simple trimmings as it needs, the bouquet, the various little class expenses and the "et ceteras" that must be entailed.

I am here reminded of a commencement day, so many years ago that none of the present crop of graduates remember, when there trailed out onto the church platform a dozen girls from a certain school, and the very plainest frock of the twelve, the one which showed least with real lace insertions and dainty loops of satin ribbon, was worn by the only girl in the class whose father could write his check for a million. I trust that the point of my argument will not be lost sight of if I add that her frock was the only distinctly ugly one in the class.

But simplicity by no means argues unbecomingness or general homeliness. My dear commencement girl, if I couldn't afford anything but a 2-out organdy—and most of you I know are going to have something quite a bit more costly than that—I would forego every bit of cheap, imitation Valenciennes that you are hoping will compensate for the cheapness of material and take my fourteen yards of sheer white muslin—everything in this white goods line—up to the very best dressmaker that I could find. She will not only give you a good fit, which will at once stamp your gown with the seal of sartorial smartness, but she will suggest a dainty way to utilize frills and little pleatings that will make your completed garment so stylish and pretty that you will sit in a blissfully happy state of satisfaction on the platform when the final light of evening arrives, and even owe to the fringes to group the coveted show skin with every feeling that borders on contentment.

It never pays to buy expensive goods and then entrust it to inexperience. And remember, too, that the general effect is the

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